

San Diego, CA Rewarding Youth Achievement Program

Profile of Partners: The San Diego RYA Program is a collaborative effort of several agencies with the San Diego Workforce Partnership as lead. The partnership also includes University of California San Diego (UCSD) Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP); Metro United Methodist Urban Ministry, a faith-based non-profit outreach agency; Gompers Secondary School (grades 7-12); and Lincoln Professional Development Academy for Medical Sciences (grades 9-12).

Area Served: Lincoln and Gompers, the target schools for the program, are part of the San Diego Unified School District and are located within the San Diego Enterprise community, one of San Diego's most economically distressed inner-city neighborhoods. In the community surrounding these cluster schools, the student population is increasingly diverse (94% non-white, compared to 68% in the school district), and family poverty rates are high (34.5% with incomes below the poverty line, compared to 11.3% countywide and 12.5% statewide.) Both schools, struggling to meet the needs of their students, score in the lowest quintile in the state.

Profile of Participants/ Outcomes: All youth in the RYA program attend either Lincoln or Gompers or reside in the Enterprise Zone. Enrolled youth were 55% female, 45% male; 52% were African American, 32 % Hispanic, and 10% Asian. Approximately ½ of the students were 16 and above.

Total number of students served: 310

Students returning to school: 270

Students enrolled in post-secondary: 40 out of 40

Improved academics, especially in math and science: 60%

Success Story: As a direct result of her RYA summer internship at a medical facility and college awareness provided by the UCSD Early Academic Outreach Program, Thaovry Meach decided to pursue a career in the medical field and attend UCSD, where she is now enrolled. Thaovry is from a low-income, high-risk area, the first person in her family to graduate from high school and attend college. She attributes much of her recent success to her involvement with the San Diego RYA Program.

Profile of Services for Youth

- **Enriched Summer Experience:** 120-180 hour internship/work experience are provided for participants with a variety of employers including Barrio Station, the University of California San Diego (UCSD), Consortium of High Schools/Undergraduate & Medical Schools (CHUM), and the Rueben H. Fleet Science Center, where staff demonstrated exceptional commitment to the quality of the work experience and strived to provide relevant and enriched internships and mentoring to RYA youth.
- **Math and Science Enhancement:** UCSD's Early Academic Outreach Program provided a weeklong residential math and science summer camp. Daily classes encouraged research and math-based approaches to science disciplines including experimentation, hypothesizing, data gathering, data analysis and data reporting. In addition to lab work, science classes included

presentations from UCSD professors, tours of active labs and the completion of a science exhibition project. UCSD college mentors provide one-to-one tutoring/mentoring in the classrooms and after school during the school year at the target area schools.

- **Year–Round Activities:** Collaboration between RYA staff, San Diego Youth @Work Coaches, school staff and UCSD Tutors has enhanced the range of services provided to participants, such as career exploration workshops provided on campus by SDY@W, job shadowing opportunities created by school staff, tutoring provided by UCSD, and case management/mentoring, and an array of volunteer/community service activities provided by RYA staff.
- **College Bound Assistance:** In addition to the residential math and science summer camp at UCSD, field trips have been conducted at UCSD, San Diego State University, and local community colleges. UCSD tutors assist RYA students with college applications, PSATs, and financial aid applications.

Roles for Partners:

Linkages to Existing Programs

- Link with Consortium of High Schools/Undergraduate & Medical Schools (CHUM) a science enrichment program for area high school students to increase interest and participation in science and provide students with an opportunity to work under scientists at UCSD for eight weeks.
- Collaboration with the Barrio Station, a community based organization in San Diego that provides select students with work readiness training, mentoring, coaches, and on-the-job training and recreation activities.
- Linkage with the United Way Volunteer Center to plan, design and implement community service activities for RYA.
- Connection with STC academies and Regional Occupation Program at the target area high schools. The occupational skills training courses include Computer Aided Drafting application, finance, the Mediversity Program (preparation for careers in healthcare), and a science technology course that blends science and computer technology advances.
- Strive provides work readiness training, personal growth and behavior modification to RYA students, in preparation for summer internships.
- Link with San Diego Youth @ Work program partners for the students co-enrolled in SDY@W and RYA. Services provided included van transportation and supportive services.

Private/Public Sector Commitments

- In the summer of 2001, ninety-five private and public employers provided internships. They have agreed to provide year-long mentoring, program evaluation feedback, job shadowing opportunities, and company tours and field trips during the year-long RYA program. RYA employer examples include museums, law offices, city government/police department, hospitals, private business, financial institutions, magazines, television stations and marketing firms.

- The program's local bank partner that agreed to commit time and resources to assist in addressing the need for "Financial Literacy"; Activities will include on-going life skills workshops and assisting each participant with establishing bank accounts.

Secondary/ Post Secondary School Commitments

- Collaboration with the San Diego Unified School District provides assistance with RYA student recruitment, assists with organizing the parent/student orientations/intake enrollment sessions, provides enrollment eligibility criteria, assists with internship development, and provides ongoing grades and citizenship information for RYA participants during the school year.
- Coordination with High Tech High provides assistance with student recruitment efforts and ongoing paid/unpaid internships and project based learning opportunities for participating students attending High Tech High.
- UCSD Early Academic Outreach Program provides academic enrichment, tutoring, mentoring, college awareness, leadership training and a summer residential math and science camp to program participants.
- San Diego State University provides college tours, college awareness activities and special events for youth.

Keys Elements in Program's Success

- **Collaboration:** The theme for the San Diego RYA program was "It Took a Village" to plan, design and implement RYA this past year. With late program start-up, we relied on RYA partnering agencies to assist with the implementation and youth development activities including: Metro United Methodist for their expertise in youth development/case management services for youth, UCSD for the tutoring, summer residential camp and the yearlong academic enrichment support, and San Diego City Schools to assist with the student recruitment/enrollment, parent orientations, progress reports and year-long activities.
- **Tutoring:** The San Diego RYA program implemented tutoring in the classrooms at the three RYA target schools. Tutors are assigned to specific classes that have a large population of RYA students. The tutors work collaboratively with teachers to provide tutoring and mentoring. After-school tutoring services are also offered at the schools and program partner sites.
- **College Bound Assistance:** UCSD tutors, who are college students, assist RYA students in completing college applications, PSAT's and financial aid applications. This has proven to be a beneficial component to the RYA program. The tutors have shared their "real life" experience in applying for college, financial aid, etc., which has enabled RYA students to better understand the challenges, best practices, and techniques in the college enrollment process.

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